

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a method for treating or arresting the progress of pathologies characterized by an accumulation of extracellular matrix components by providing an agent to suppress the activity of transforming growth factor  $\beta$  (TGF- $\beta$ ) a peptide growth factor which is anabolic and leads to fibrosis and angiogenesis. In one embodiment, such agent is anti-TGF- $\beta$  antibody. Pathologies which can be so treated include, but are not limited to, glomerulonephritis, adult respiratory distress syndrome and cirrhosis of the liver. The invention further provides a method for the diagnosis of pathologies, or incipient pathologies, which are characterized by the accumulation of extracellular matrix components in tissues by determining the levels of TGF- $\beta$  in the tissues, a high level being indicative of such pathologies.